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Regenerative & Cellular Sciences

An Interactive Workshop MORAL/SOCIAL VALUES



Solidarity.
Source: Unknown

WHAT ARE VALUES?

Values can be understood as the deeply held and sometimes unarticulated ideals and principles which we as a society and as individuals hold, and which move societies/communities to respond, either positively or negatively, to possibilities.

'I have very simple ways of defining morality So, for me it would be sentences like, 'don't do to others things that you don't want done upon you', or 'defend the rights of the people in terms of equality and justice'. ... But I don't have a personal definition of it.'
Argentine Researcher]

'So everyone of us knows what is not moral. It is more difficult to say what is moral. What are the standards of moral?' [Argentine Regulator]



Human Dignity.
Source: F. Sockwell

VALUES DEFINED

The following are some values that are discussed in international and academic circles:

Solidarity: Individuals are socially interconnected and embedded (participating in a variety of overlapping relationships – familial, communal, national, international), and have a duty, based on compassion and fraternity, to contribute to the creation of a just society.

Autonomy: Individuals have a right of self-determination or self-rule; a right to receive the information necessary to make informed decisions in relation to their own bodies and health.

Equality: Every individual, regardless of race, age, gender, orientation, health status or genetic make-up, is of equal value; given differences in circumstances, differently situated individuals must be treated equitably (as opposed to identically)

Human Dignity: All individuals are, by virtue of their membership in the human race, are deserving of respect; they have worth and must be valued as ends in and of themselves; they must not be instrumentalised or treated merely as means to an end.

Democracy: Individuals have a right to participate in decisions relating to the direction and limits of biotechnology; their engagement must be facilitated, and their opinions must inform public policy.

Justice: All individuals should be equal before the law, and entitled to equal protection of the law; they should have entitlements to public benefits, be subject to transparent decisions in respect of those benefits, and have ready access to legal remedies where aggrieved.

Sanctity of Life: Human life is special and/or sacred; where human life (biologically) exists, it must be encouraged, facilitated and preserved.

Wellbeing: The human experience – consciousness, self-awareness, reasoning – is of special value and relies on functionality such that everyone has a responsibility toward their own physical and psychological wellbeing.

How important are these values to Argentine society?
Would they be defined differently given the Argentine context?
Are there other values that are important in the Argentine context?



Truth.
Source: PurpleArtGallery

HOW DO WE VINDICATE OUR VALUES?

'I personally would do what the law tells me. Of course, laws change with time and with the different way of thinking of the society. So I hope we can really put scientific facts and acceptance of research in front of other types of issues, but I need to accept other opinions and moral values that could influence research. ... I would not say moral values should not interfere with research.' [Argentine researcher]

'I think ... IRB peer review from the scientific community at a local level and at a national level [and] through the funding agencies [is the best way to accommodate values] ... but with two check points: a local check point and the National Funding Agency.' [Argentine Researcher]

'I don't believe in bioethics as a simple observing discipline. No. I think that bioethics ... must at least give advice on what must be done and what must not be done.' [Argentine Academic]



Autonomy.
Source: S. Janssen